

Job Spec

CAPITAL ACCOUNTANT G7

SALARY FROM £49,403 + qualification allowance from £3,107

We are recruiting these positions in Birmingham, Bristol, Exeter, Leeds, London, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Peterborough, Reading, Warrington, Worcester, Worthing, York on a Blended/flexible basis

About the job:-

DEFRA is the UK government department responsible for safeguarding our natural environment, supporting our world-leading food and farming industry, and sustaining a thriving rural economy. Our broad remit means we play a major role in people's day-to-day life, from the food we eat, and the air we breathe, to the water we drink.

Natural England (NE) are the Government's statutory adviser for the Natural Environment, playing a vital role in delivering the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. Natural England work with a wide range of partners, stakeholders and customers on a huge range of projects.

As a Capital Accountant in the Natural England Finance Business Partner (FBP) team within Defra Finance, you will ensure stewardship of public funds and efficient and effective use of budgets. You will provide advice on budgets across the organisation, challenge forecasts to ensure they are robust and protect the Accounting Officer's interest as outlined in Managing Public Money.

You will provide insightful financial advice and analysis, promote commercial awareness to inform decision making, provide constructive challenge and ensure that financial governance, control, and alignment is maintained. Your role is to protect, drive and add value. You will build trust with decision makers so that your advice is actively sought; and be seen as a critical friend giving sound financial advice while challenging existing assumptions.

You will take ownership of the capital portfolio to help shape and influence plans and develop business cases which demonstrate value for money while meeting the organisation's priorities.

You will work collaboratively with colleagues, to ensure that good practice is identified, shared and developed between FBPs, that consistency of approach is adopted and to build and embed financial capability and understanding across the organisation.

You will be respected for your financial knowledge and skill, providing sound advice and ensuring the business adheres to relevant finance policies. The role is equally about leadership, relationship and information management as it is about financial technical skills

Job description

Key responsibilities will include but not be limited to: -

We're looking for someone with technical acumen who can develop relationships. You will contribute to the key accountabilities of the workstream, which include:

- Supporting the governance and effective management of the capital programme, providing advice on accounting treatment and review and challenge of business cases.
- Provide hands-on professional support to the Directorate Finance Business Partners and the NE business.
- Setting the organisational capital budget each year and then managing the overall capital financial position over the course of the year to within the agreed budget delegation.
- Supporting the NE Finance Director and the NE Senior Leadership Team in their Spending review submission and how this feeds into financial planning in the medium term. Co-ordinating the financial data to give financial insight and a clear picture of Natural England's submission, and how this links into future financial planning. This will involve challenging financial data gathered to ensure this is representative, in line with guidance provided, robust and accurate.
- Work alongside the existing grade 7 to convert, set and delegate budgets across the organisation. Provide clear advice on financial management responsibilities for Budget Holders along with any relevant key finance issues they need to be aware of.
- Working alongside the existing grade 7, manage the total organisational NE financial position, covering all funding and activities.
- Throughout the year challenge the integrity and robustness of the monthly reporting and organisational financial position in terms of year-to-date position, funding streams, current and future risks and opportunities and forecast assumptions.
- Natural England works in an ever-changing environment and is often faced with problems which have financial implications. This role provides trusted advice and options as to how such problems may be overcome in line with financial reporting rules and guidance and implements new accounting solutions, ensuring reporting mechanisms are in place to support any changes.
- Determine and document the accounting treatment of key capital financial issues, providing a clear audit trails for year-end accounting purposes and NAO audit. This requires being able to apply relevant accounting standards as articulated in the IFRS, FreM and Consolidated Budgeting guidance.
- Management of team member or oversight of other's work and developing leadership skills within and across teams.
- Build strong relationships with a wide range of Natural England stakeholders as well as colleagues across Finance and the wider department, to provide a joined-up service.
- Attend senior stakeholder forums to discuss and present data which will appropriately influence Natural England's decisions, challenging and supporting the business to enhance decision-making and increase performance.
- Providing specialist financial advice.
- Engaging with experts on behalf of the business and providing advice on key financial planning, processes, and budget setting.
- Provide accurate, timely and insightful reporting monthly to the NE Leadership team, key NE Governance groups and Defra

Essential Experience and Skills:-

[Success Profiles - Experience \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

- Excellent financial accounting skills, understanding of accounting standards and a proven ability to apply them to the projects you support.
- Experience of working in a finance business partnering or strategic finance role.
- Experience of demonstrating strong inter-personal and written communication skills with an ability to explain finance issues to senior audiences. Understand the vision for the business and confidently lead others to realise the vision. Be highly visible across their area as the primary point of contact for financial advice.
- Experience of delivering high quality financial analysis under pressure and to tight deadlines through excellent analytical, data management and modelling skills and the capacity to get senior leadership to focus on critical issues to deliver improved performance, value for money and enable decision making.
- Demonstrable ability to apply a wide range of strong technical skills across a wide range of financial disciplines and a proven ability to apply them to the customers you support.
- Good relationship management skills and personal credibility with senior stakeholders across a broad network both inside and outside of government.
- Experience in the application of Managing Public Money and Consolidated Budgeting Guidance.
- Developing financial awareness in colleagues and enhancing their development.
- Experience in leading and managing a professional team with the ability to inspire and motivate at all levels.
- Meeting targets and delivering quality outcomes within tight deadlines through effective prioritisation.
- Excellent IT skills, particularly Microsoft Excel and experience in the use of a modern accounting system (preferably Oracle).

Technical Skills if applicable

[Success Profiles - Technical \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oral and written presentation skills• Data and analytics interpretation
Practitioner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budgeting, forecasting, and costing• The Budgeting Framework• Commercial acumen• Investment appraisal and evaluation
Working knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finance Functional Standard• Strategic analysis and insight• Consolidated Budgeting Guidance• HMT Green Book• Managing Public Money• Accounting Officer responsibilities• Performance and risks• Understanding the role of the NAO• Risk management and fraud• Interpretation of accounts

Qualifications –

- Qualified with [CCAB](#), [CIMA](#) or equivalent

But formal qualifications are not necessarily required to be successful in this role if the applicant can show relevant past experience.

Employees are eligible to receive an accountancy allowance during their professional CCAB, CIMA or ACCA training at the following (non-cumulative) increments:

- 'Part Qualified 1' will receive £796 (National) or £1,281 (London) annually.
- 'Part Qualified 2' will receive £1,590 (National) or £2,553 (London) annually.
- 'Fully Qualified' will receive £3,107(National) or £4,495(London) annually.

Behaviours

[Success Profiles - Civil Service Behaviours \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

- Communicating and Influencing
- Changing and Improving
- Managing a Quality Service
- Seeing the Big Picture

Strengths

[Success Profiles - Civil Service Strengths Dictionary \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

- Adaptable
- Analytical
- Strategic
- Team Player

Interview

Candidate successful at sift stage will be invited to a video assessment/interview (1hour 20/25 mins) that will consist of a blended interview of Behaviours and Strengths. A presentation or additional exercise relative to the role will also be assessed, further details will be given to candidates selected for interview.

Blended Working

Defra operates a blended working policy subject to business need, giving people the flexibility to choose when and where they work and collaborate with others.

Individuals are expected to work from one of the office locations stated in the advert to connect with their colleagues, as required by their role and business team needs. There is flexibility to split the working week, spending minimum of 40-60% in the workplace, unless exceptional circumstances apply and/or you are a contractual home worker.

Location

Please be aware that this role(s) will be contractually based in a Defra group workplace/office. The successful candidate is required to carry out all their duties from a UK location and cannot do so from an overseas location at any time.

Internal (core Defra) employees can apply for this role and choose to remain in their current location or to be based in one of the advertised locations.

All other applicants will be based in one of the advertised locations. Candidates will need to state their region preference on the application form so we can advise appropriate office locations.

To work from 2 Marsham Street, you will require the higher level of CTC clearance. Therefore, confirmation of appointment to the advertised post will be dependent upon successful CTC clearance being confirmed as part of pre-employment checks.

Reserve

A reserve list may be held for a period of 12 months from which further appointments can be made.